

Plant Protection and Quarantine Officer
Domestic Program Coordinator
GS- 436-11

I. INTRODUCTION

The incumbent is responsible for coordinating, assisting, and advising the State Plant Health Director in all phases, both scientific and administrative of cooperative Plant Protection and Quarantine (PPQ) programs and related activities. In this capacity the incumbent shares the responsibility for formulating, organizing, distributing and responding to information reports or requests of major plant pest programs to protect the health, welfare, and agricultural economy of the United States. The incumbent oversees the program coordination and implementation, information gathering and dissemination, program GPS and mapping, and data management for multiple and cooperative programs throughout the state. Incumbent acts in a single work unit but with a statewide focus. Incumbent acts as the State Plant Health Director (SPHD) during his or her absence from the state.

II. DUTIES

Advises, assists, and participates with the State Plant Health Director and staff in the design and development of guidelines to be used for survey, sampling, control, trace back, regulatory, methods development and improvement and/or eradication phases of programs carried out throughout the state. Assists in the development of operational standards and procedures for use by employees in PPQ programs.

The incumbent is responsible for managing on a statewide basis multiple program areas that may include, but not limited to, the following programs: post entry quarantine, Karnal Bunt, gypsy moth, biological control, grasshopper/Mormon cricket, Contracting Officer's Representative, biotechnology, noxious weeds, boll weevil, other pests for which a program is or will be developed and AQI duties as may be assigned. Anticipates and provides solutions for problems in program areas without the direction of the State Plant Health Director.

Assembles and prepares scientific and related material in many subject matter fields for use in writing or updating instructions and guidelines, providing budgetary data, identifying technical training needs, and developing essential program information. Upon request by CPHST to support its initiatives, incumbent collects insects, plants and/or weeds by using personal expertise, knowledge of biological facts and of the state's climatological, geographical and topographical features. Such collections are done without any or little guidance or guidelines.

Coordinates operational functions with cooperators, other government entities, industries, private citizens and other stakeholders. Provides technical advice which affects the international, interstate, and the intrastate movement of crops, agricultural products, equipment and packing material. Assists in the coordination of all aspects of special programs, and newly emerging programs and keeps the State Plant Health Director apprised of the current status.

Drafts proposals or work plans for review by the State Plant Health Director to improve the administration and operation of the various programs within the state. Assimilates background information for the State Plant Health Director and participates in developing critical scientific and administrative data on the conduct, intensification, extension, or modification of programs. Obtains the coordination and cooperation of Regional and program staff in the development and implementation of program activities.

Tracks the progress of the programs for which the incumbent is responsible in a state in order to provide technical assistance in overall program operations. Shares in the responsibility for advising other state staff on the priority and nature of activities in accordance with present, anticipated, and unexpected program requirements. Using climatological and biological data and other information, predicts and plans program activities to achieve the goals of PPQ programs within the state using various scientific and analytical techniques.

Assists in the review of documents, proposals, draft regulations, guidelines, and procedures prepared by the national staff, or others, and develops or coordinates the development of the state's response for consideration by National, Regional, and State Management. This may include further dissemination of the documents, proposals, and drafts within the state, and then analyzes, assembles, consolidates, edits, and summarizes the views of others to finalize the state's response to Headquarters and the Regions.

Prepares and submits annual reports which comprehensively summarizes the progress of PPQ's programs within the state. Such summaries would include but are not limited to: summary of survey results; summary of complaints and treatments; summary of actions taken by state and local entities, private groups and consortiums; and summary and documentation of environmental concerns and activities. Annual reports and summaries are prepared using GPS mapping and data management.

In addition, prepares environmental documentation required by National Environmental Protection Act. Independently sets up and conducts public hearings and information sharing meetings. Provides training and technology transfers to public and private stakeholders about specific program areas and concerns. Conducts field-day workshops to state and county personnel, landowners and other stakeholders on relevant areas of PPQ programs.

Identifies or verifies identification of noxious weeds and plant pests, such as plant pathogens, insects and nematodes, found without the incumbent's state. Identifies specimens to genera and, where sufficient information is available, to species. Identifies or verifies plant pests' hosts and geographical distribution within the incumbent's state.

Independently implements programs for which the incumbent is responsible. Provides direction and assistance to cooperators, technical, and scientific personnel who are planning, organizing, and conducting the work for specific programs. Participates with the State Plant Health Director in coordinating and integrating assigned functions with those of the staff and the officials in the state, Region, throughout PPQ, and with other concerned Federal and State Officials, stakeholders, interested parties, and agencies.

Independently initiates contacts with cooperators/stakeholders and CPHST laboratories to acquire specific biological control agents for particular plant and insect pests (target). Works with cooperators/stakeholders and general public to ensure host specificity issues have been addressed. Conducts assessment of potential release sites to help optimize the establishment of biocontrol agent(s), such as field insectaries. Provides analysis of climatic data and biology of target for timing of release and increase likelihood of establishment. Determines when and where public hearings and meetings concerning biological agent should be held and conducts such meetings. Coordinates releases and the redistribution of biological control agents with all affected parties, including but not limited to, other governmental and tribal entities, private landowners and state cooperators. Provides monitoring which can require extensive methodology in determining the successful establishment of a particular biocontrol agent. Implements as the final phase of biological control the technical transfer to the cooperators/stakeholders in the managing and creation of new field insectaries (redistribution).

Supervises and directs the activities of various seasonal subordinates on recurring bases. Recruit, interviews and hires personnel to participate in specific programs. Grants and denies leave; and imposes discipline if necessary. The incumbent plans, organizes, and coordinates the work of subordinate employees. Reviews work for accuracy, completeness, and compliance with established procedures.

Provides continuity of program and administrative management during absence of the State Plant Health Director. When acting as State Plant Health Director, makes independent decisions in program and administrative matters as the needs arise.

III. FACTORS

1. KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED BY THE POSITION:

Comprehensive knowledge of international agricultural trade practices and biological and agricultural science, principles, and concepts in order to serve as the technical authority for the full range of activities within the state.

Technical expertise in order to develop, propose, and recommend substantial Program or regional program innovations, significant Program changes, or alternate courses of critical management action, and skill in applying recent advances and research findings to adjustments in operations plans.

Comprehensive knowledge of quarantine regulations and treatment methods including the ability to adapt existing techniques to meet program needs. Comprehensive knowledge of APHIS policies, procedures, and regulations in order to apply these to the state programs.

Knowledge of the budgetary process, staffing guidelines, workload analysis, and organizational structure sufficient to conduct studies, make immediate and long range plans in order to meet current and projected program requirements.

Sufficient taxonomical expertise and knowledge in order to identify plants pests, plants, weeds, insect and nematodes within the incumbent's state. Knowledge of biological and scientific principles to plan and carry out the activities of programs. Knowledge of scientific techniques of collection and identification.

2. SUPERVISORY CONTROLS:

Incumbent works under the general direction of the State Plant Health Director who provides the overall objectives and resources to accomplish the work. He/She is responsible for independently planning, designing, coordinating, and implementing the program objectives throughout the state or particular areas or programs, evaluating progress, and proposing as necessary, program changes to overcome difficulties experienced during the operational aspects of the programs. Technical recommendations are normally accepted without significant change. Work is reviewed in terms of meeting program objectives and effectiveness in resolving programmatic deficiencies and coordination among interested parties.

3. GUIDELINES:

Available guides are broad technical policies and planning objectives of top-level management; policy as expressed in controlling states and the approved plans which specify management direction and emphasis. Independent initiative and experienced judgment is required to modify or recommend the modification or accepted methods and practices and develop techniques appropriate for the successful resolution of deficiencies and problems encountered. However, guidance for a significant portion of the work performed and must rely on experience and knowledge of Agency past practices.

4. COMPLEXITY:

This position provides varied and diverse assignments and involves broad and markedly different activities associated with technical and scientific issues and activities and managerial demands in coordinating the available resources. Participates and plans activities that engenders and ensures the cooperation of numerous interest groups in the state's programs.

The independent evaluation and analysis conducted by the incumbent of the ongoing programs within the Program requires the assessment of unusual circumstances and issues and the skillful adjustment of methods, procedures, and plans to overcome the unexpected difficulties.

Decisions and problem resolution involves such areas as recommending the development and implementation of new or revised operations procedures, the initiation of guides for operating unit personnel, and the evaluation and analysis of the program execution and operation phases.

The incumbent must exercise a high degree of resourcefulness and ingenuity in devising or reviewing long-range and short-range solutions to problems of a unique or novel nature which preclude the application of standardized methods.

5. SCOPE AND EFFECT:

The purpose of the work is to participate in the development of the overall plans and objectives of the state, and to make recommendations to implement and manage all aspects of the various programs throughout the Program. The decisions and recommendations of the incumbent will have long-range effects on the future of PPQ programs, their goals and objectives, and the acceptance by the public and various interest groups.

6. PERSONAL CONTACTS:

Interagency contacts include the staff officers, and pest management professionals within PPQ. Contacts also include officials in other Federal agencies, State, County, and local officials, extension personnel, high ranking State department and agricultural administrators, organized farm groups, individual farm owners, cooperators, stakeholders, contractors, and others in similar positions in related agencies or in private groups.

7. PURPOSE OF CONTACTS:

The purpose is to plan and develop through formal negotiations and working agreements cooperative endeavors with State, County, and local community officials to conduct program operations and to establish and maintain contacts and individuals and organizations who may have opposing viewpoints and/or who apply pressure to further their specific goals. Meetings, particularly with key State, County, and local officials, may involve decisions and commitments which have important implications for overall agency programs and objectives of a far-reaching nature.

8. PHYSICAL DEMANDS:

The work is generally sedentary. However, some field visits may require physical exertion such as walking over rough or rocky terrain or climbing ladders on rail cars or grain elevators.

9. WORK ENVIRONMENT:

The work is performed in both an office setting and in the field. Some exposure to moderate discomfort is encountered on field trips such as extremes of heat and cold and inclement weather. Work may involve driving long distances, occasionally in poor driving conditions.